



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR

July 1, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Andrew Clough, Director, Public Works

Subject: Downtown Berkeley Plaza and Transit Area Improvement Project Update

RECOMMENDATION

1. Receive a progress report and provide input on the revised 35% Design Plan for the City-owned Downtown Plaza and BART-owned station entry structures modified in response to input received through the April 28, 2014 public open house and multiple subsequent stakeholder meetings; and
2. Direct the City Manager to be responsive to the input received, and to return to Council as soon as feasible with the Final 35% Design Plan for conceptual approval. The Final 35% Design Plan will be used as the basis for final plans, specifications and estimates for improvements to City and BART facilities in the Downtown Plaza and Transit Area.

SUMMARY

The Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), in coordination with the City of Berkeley Public Works Department and stakeholders, is currently engaged in an engineering design and environmental clearance process for the improvements to the City-owned Downtown Plaza and BART-owned station entry structures. Building on previous public outreach, BART and City staff held a public open house on April 28, 2014 to solicit public comments on the 35% Design Plan for the City and BART facilities in the Downtown Plaza and Transit Area. Comments received through the on-going public involvement process are a mix of support and critiques.

The BART design team is continuing to revise the design consistent with the project goals presented in the Background Section of this Report and based on comments and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders. The on-going work with stakeholders will be documented in a Supplemental Report that will be provided to the City Council on June 26th, 2014 and presented to the Council along with this report on July 1, 2014. This design will transform the Plaza into one that will be welcoming, transit oriented and secure through passive design elements. For example, revisions underway or agreed to in concept, include: 1) adjustments to the path of pedestrian travel through the Plaza that allows pedestrians to contribute to the vibrancy of the space; 2) a renewed emphasis on multimodal connections, and the quality of amenities for those passengers using AC Transit services in addition to BART; 3) an exploration of alternative paving

materials to provide a high-quality yet durable finish within project budget; and 4) a complete review, and incorporation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals in coordination with the Berkeley Police Department. In addition, the design team is incorporating infrastructure to support activities, programs and art, in coordination with the Civic Arts Commission and others.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None at this time. The BART Plaza project is funded by federal grants with local matching funds, as detailed in the grant funding agreement approved by the Council on June 25, 2013¹

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

In April 2014, BART's project team completed a 35% Design Plan for the Downtown Plaza and BART station entrances, including a replacement for the main entry "rotunda" structure near the southwest corner of Shattuck and Center. The design was consistent with the project goals and based on design principles affirmed at public open houses held in December 2013 and February 2014. The design principles include transparency in structures, openness in plaza spaces, and the ability to flexibly program activities within the plaza for all users.

Public Open House on April 28, 2014

BART and the City of Berkeley held a public open house on April 28, 2014 at the David Brower Center in Downtown Berkeley to present the 35% Design Plan which is illustrated in Attachment 1: 35% Design Illustrations. This meeting was well attended, with over 100 attendees and 75 comment cards received. Comments at the meeting indicated general agreement that the design was consistent with the project goals, but opinion on the specific elements, such as structures, was split. While a majority of responses supported the idea of transparency for the main entry and bus shelters, many expressed concern over glass paving and structures, indicating wariness over the potential difficulty in maintaining these elements. Others felt the architectural design of the main entry was inappropriate for such a prominent location, with some expressing a desire to simply retrofit the existing rotunda into a more transparent structure and more in line with the design principles. Property owners communicated a preference to increase the quality of paving materials, from concrete to granite. The Art Wall, proposed to be accommodated adjacent to the existing, immovable vent structure near the south end of the plaza, was a major area of concern, as many thought this element would detract from the openness and transparency of the new plaza. See Attachment 2 for a complete Summary of Comments.

Additional Public Involvement

The public involvement process and opportunities for stakeholders to provide input has continued since the open house. Following the April event, BART's design team began

¹ June 25, 2013 report: www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2013/06Jun/Documents/2013-06-25_Item_30_Grant_Funding_Agreement_for_MTC.aspx

refining the 35% Design Plan based on comments received. As part of this process, the design team reached out to a number of key stakeholders, including the University of California, Berkeley Design Advocates, the Downtown Business Association, the Berkeley Arts Commission, and the City of Berkeley Police Department. The Design Team worked with stakeholders to determine how comments could best be addressed and incorporated with the goal of achieving as inclusive a consensus as possible, given the breadth of comments, range of opinions on several issues, and the technical and budgetary constraints of the project.

Consideration of Comments

Responses to comments received generally fall into the following three categories:

1. **Integrate suggestions into the design:** Many comments include direct suggestions, critiques, or concerns that fit within the design objectives of the project and the design team is working to revise the design in response to these comments. Examples are: provide additional sound/lighting poles to better support the use of the Plaza for performances and art installations; design the main BART entry canopy to maximize transparency; and, bring pedestrian circulation into the Plaza and define space for a flexible amount of seating along existing storefronts.
2. **Modify design in response to comment's intent:** Some suggested changes or refinements may not be specifically feasible, but a design change or refinement can be considered that addresses the comments' intent. For example, there are several comments calling for the use of granite or other enhanced paving materials throughout the plaza. This is likely not viable given the budgetary constraints of the project and maintenance issues inherent in a porous material such as granite; however, the team is continuing to work to ensure that the materials, finishes, and pattern of the plaza paving are high-quality, can be maintained effectively, and are viable given the construction budget and maintenance considerations.
3. **Evaluate feasibility or consistency with project goals:** Some proposed design changes or refinements are not feasible within the budget, for technical reasons, or are beyond the scope or control of the project. Others conflict with the broadly accepted design objectives of the project. For example, comments about increasing the extent of permanent seating that is included in the design, with one comment asking for permanent/managed seating to be a dominant feature within the redesigned plaza. However, this is in conflict with CEPTED Principles and the broadly accepted objectives of creating a more open and flexible public space.

Summary of Changes since April 28 Open House

1. Adjustments to the path of pedestrian travel through the Plaza that allow pedestrians to contribute to the vibrancy of the space.
2. A renewed emphasis on multimodal connections and the quality of amenities, such as bus shelters for those passengers using AC Transit services.
3. An exploration of alternative paving materials to provide a high-quality yet durable finish within project budget.

4. Identify thoughtful wayfinding that provides information and encourages good pedestrian circulation.
5. Modified locations for the Art Wall, and sound and light poles.
6. A complete review and incorporation of CPTED principals in coordination with the Berkeley Police Department.

Continued Dialogue with Stakeholders

The design team is continuing to work on developing design changes and refinements in response to comments that have been received to date. The Team will continue working with stakeholders to develop a design that achieves project objectives, and satisfies the needs and desires of as broad a range of stakeholder input as feasible. The on-going work with stakeholders will be documented in a Supplemental Report that will be provided to the City Council on June 26th, 2014 and presented to the Council along with this report on July 1, 2014.

Funding Modifications

In addition to design revision, BART was notified in Spring 2014 of the reprogramming of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, which make up a significant portion of the project's construction budget, to a cycle two years later than currently planned. In an effort to keep the entire project on schedule, as recommended by the Alameda County Transportation Commission, BART has applied for state Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds to fill the gap. If the ATP funds are not awarded, other means to provide bridge funding will be identified.

BACKGROUND

Improvements to the Downtown Plaza and BART facilities were first studied in 2008, and appear in the City's 2010 Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan, the 2012 Downtown Area Plan, and the Berkeley's Climate Action Plan, as well as BART station planning documents. Based on these plans and planning processes, the City has applied for and received multiple grants funding the design and construction of various elements of the project.

In 2010, the City was awarded \$1,805,000 in Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Grant Program. These funds are matched with \$400,000 from the University of California Long Range Development Plan Mitigation Fund. The grant funds and match are intended to advance the design of the project, and to construct as many project elements as feasible. In 2011, the City and BART agreed that it would be in the best interests of the Project to designate BART as the recipient of the TLC grant funds. Both agencies requested that MTC amend the Transportation Improvement Program and grant agreements as needed for BART to be the recipient of the funds. MTC agreed and grant authority was assigned to BART in September 2011.

In March 2013, the City submitted a grant application to the Alameda County Transportation Commission's (Alameda CTC) FY 2012/13 Coordinated Funding Program requesting sufficient funds to complete all phases and construct all planned elements of the Project. The March 5, 2013 report to Council² stated that Alameda CTC would allocate the grant funds directly to BART, as the agency responsible for project delivery (Resolution 66,018–N.S.).

In May 2013, the Alameda CTC approved draft recommendations to award BART \$4,066,000 in Federal funds and \$3,718,000 in Vehicle Registration Funds for the Downtown Berkeley BART Plaza & Transit Area Improvements. On June 13, 2013, the BART Board of Directors adopted a Resolution of Local Support to accept \$7.8 million for the Berkeley BART Plaza and Transit Area Improvements Project.

As lead agency on this project, BART has also agreed to contribute \$721,360 in Proposition 1B Lifeline funds to be used towards improved wayfinding, and \$521,250 in BART general funds for improvement of intermodal connections and station accessibility. In 2013, the City and BART created a partnership and executed a Memorandum of Understanding outlining each of their responsibilities for project delivery and formalizing BART's role as the lead agency.

Project Goals, Scope and Budget

As included in the Memorandum of Understanding, the goals of the Downtown Plaza and Transit Area Improvement Project are to:

- Enhance transit accessibility and prominence in Downtown Berkeley by improving the areas where people wait for transit connections;
- Increase the visibility and security of secondary BART entries;
- Upgrade disabled access to transit through new curb ramps and improved access to the BART elevator;
- Improve bicycle parking capacity and security;
- Create a more welcoming and inviting space for all users of the Plaza; and
- Support transit-oriented development in accordance with the Downtown Area Plan and Priority Development Area designation within the MTC/ABAG Focus program.

The scope of the project is limited to modifications and reconstruction of the plaza, main BART entrance and secondary entrances, and new bus shelters. This scope echoes the applications and agreements in place for the grants allocated to fund the project.

² March 2013 report for Grant Application: FY 2012/13 Alameda County Coordinated Funding Program: www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2013/03Mar/Documents/2013-03-05_Item_06_Grant_Application.aspx

Funding levels by project element and grant funding source are provided in this table:

	FTA (TLC)	UC LRDP	OBAG/VRF	BART 1B	BART GF	Total
Scope Elements	\$1,795,000	\$400,000	\$7,784,000	\$721,360	\$521,250	\$11,221,610
Plaza Design	\$495,000	\$0			\$0	\$495,000
Main Entrance Design	\$150,000	\$0			\$300,000	\$450,000
Stair Canopy Design	\$0	\$0			\$221,250	\$221,250
Bus Shelter Design	\$105,000	\$0			\$0	\$105,000
Wayfinding & Signage Design	\$85,000	\$50,000		\$121,360	\$0	\$256,360
Environmental Compliance	\$65,000	\$50,000			\$0	\$115,000
Site Prep and Demolition	\$300,000	\$0	\$1,500,000		\$0	\$1,800,000
Plaza Construction	\$0	\$0	\$1,200,000		\$0	\$1,200,000
Main Entrance Construction	\$0	\$0	\$2,500,000		\$0	\$2,500,000
Bus Shelter Construction	\$500,000	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$500,000
Stair Canopy Construction	\$0	\$0	\$1,600,000		\$0	\$1,600,000
Wayfinding & Signs Design & Install	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$600,000	\$0	\$900,000
Project Contingency	\$95,000	\$0	\$984,000		\$0	\$1,079,000
TOTAL	\$1,795,000	\$400,000	\$7,784,000	\$721,360	\$521,250	\$11,221,610

Following the project kick-off in October 2013, the City and BART have completed a number of outreach events related to gathering public input on the goals and designs for the renewed plaza and structures. Prior to the April 28, 2014 35% Design Plan open house, over 15 events had been held or attended by the project team. These events, and their results, are summarized in Attachment 4: Prior Public Outreach.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Completion of the Downtown Plaza and Transit Area Improvement Project will result in enhanced transit accessibility and usage, resulting in the reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips and their concomitant emissions. Improvements to the plaza and transit service will also support denser development in Downtown Berkeley, as outlined in the Downtown Area Plan, and with improvements to the pedestrian environment on the plaza, will increase the attractiveness of using zero-impact modes such as cycling and walking for shorter trips made possible by living closer to work, school, and recreation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

BART and Public Works staff seek to inform Council of progress on the project and obtain Council input on the response to comments on the 35% design.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

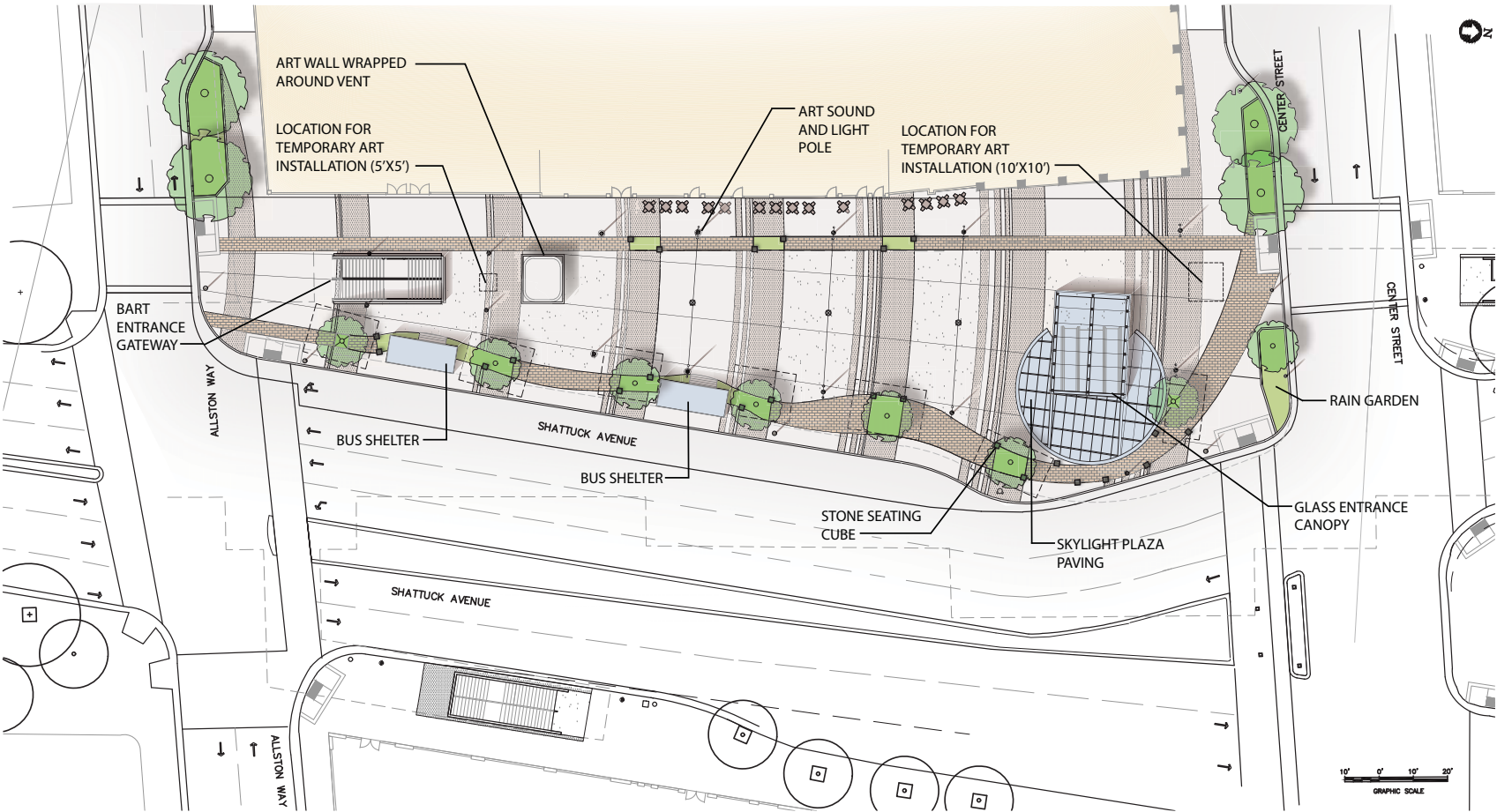
Andrew Clough, Director, Public Works, 981-6303

Farid Javandel, Transportation Division Manager, Public Works, 981-7061

Andrew Heidel, Associate Transportation Planner, Public Works, 981-7066

Attachments:

1. April 28th 35% Design Illustrations
2. Summary of Comments on 35% Design
3. Prior Public Outreach



View South from Center Street: Existing



View South from Center Street: April 28th Design Rendering



Main Plaza from Sidewalk: Existing



Main Plaza from Sidewalk: April 28th Design Rendering



Improved Bus Shelters: April 28th Design Rendering

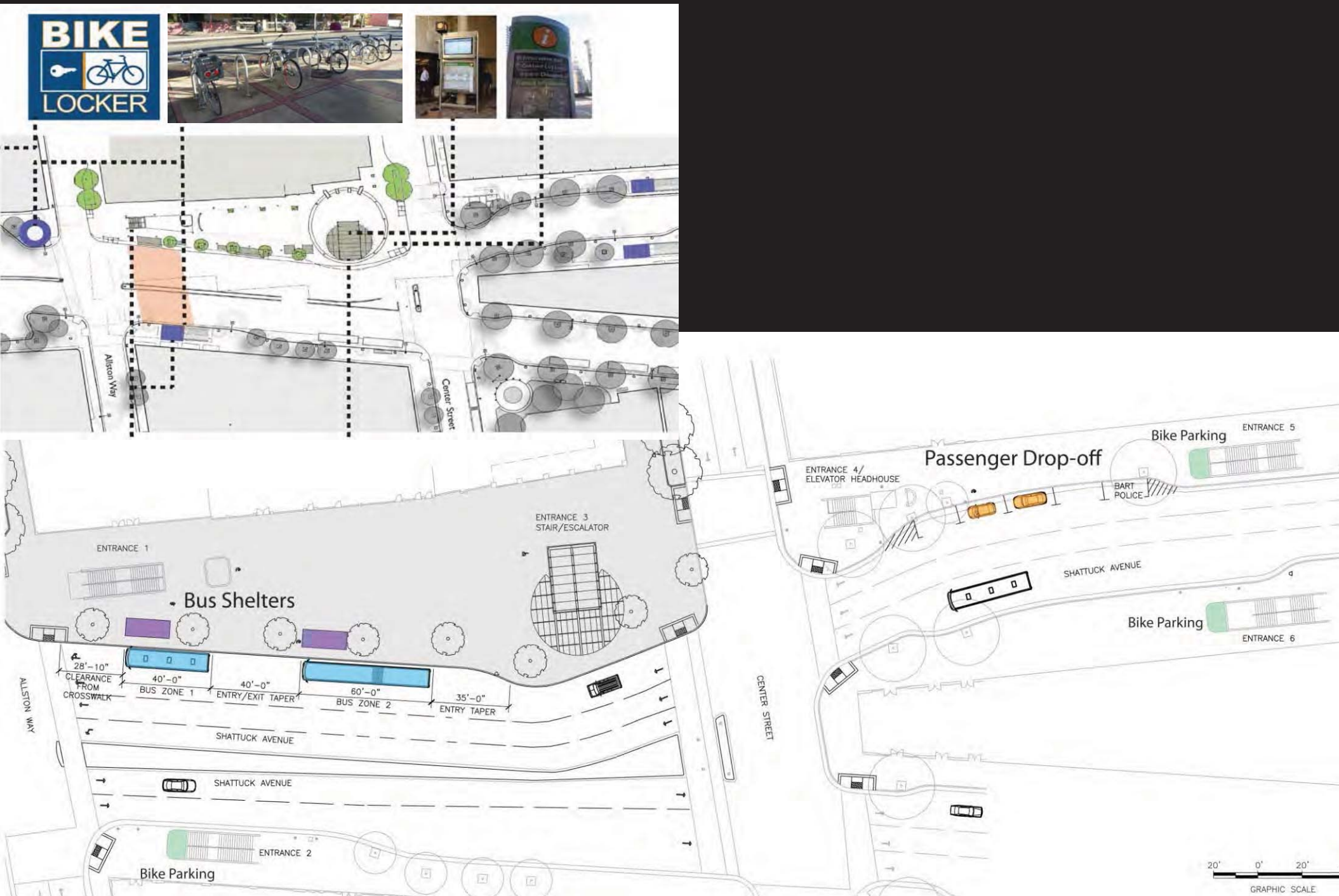


View from Shattuck Ave: April 28th Design Rendering





Intermodal Coordination: April 28th 35% Design



Wayfinding and Transit Connectivity - April 28th Kickoff

Plaza Level

Station Identity



Transit Information Kiosk



Transit Information Maps



Station Concourse

Transit Information Displays



Real-time Displays



Station Wayfinding Signs



Exit Directories



Potential Destinations

- Cultural**
 - Aurora Theatre
 - Berkeley Community Theatre
 - Berkeley Historical Society
 - Berkeley Public Library
 - Berkeley Repertory Theatre
 - California Theatre
 - Magnes Collection
 - Marsh Arts Center
 - UC Berkeley Art Museum
- Education**
 - Berkeley City College
 - Berkeley High School
 - Jazzschool
 - University of California
- Government**
 - MLK Jr Civic Center
 - Post Office
 - Ronald Tsukamoto Public Safety Bldg
- Institutions**
 - Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
 - David Brower Center
- Recreation**
 - Edwards Stadium
 - MLK Jr Civic Center Park
 - YMCA Teen Center
- Transportation**
 - AC Transit
 - BART
 - Bikestation

WAYFINDING Berkeley BART Station Examples of BART wayfinding standards

Attachment 2

Stakeholders Review Comments

Comment #	Question 1: Overall Design Statement			Question 2: Plaza Design			Question 3: Main Entry		Question 4: Potential Leasable Pavilion				Additional Comments
	Do you agree that the Preliminary Design presented today reflected the following design statements (see comment card for statements)?	Are there types of activities and events currently identified within the flexible plaza space ones you would use or participate in?	What other types of activities and event should be provided for within the plaza?	Does the amount and location of landscape meet your vision for the plaza?	Public Art: Does the art wall and location for temp art installation meet your desires for public art in the project?	Public Art: Feed back for Civic Arts Commission?	Please give us your comment as to the current design of the main entry structure.	Do you think a pavilion in this area of the plaza would be a beneficial addition and why	If yes, would it be okay if the space extended north of the existing vent	Stakeholders have discussed a range of potential uses such as a visitor's center or a café use. Do you support any of these uses, and why? Do you have other ideas for the use of the pavilion that would help activate the plaza?	Should the pavilion match the design style of the BART entries and bus shelters or do you have specific thoughts on a different style?		
Summary	Comments agreeing with flexible plaza concept (25); disagree (6).	General "yes's (33)	concerts/music (13); small vendors such as newspaper, flowers, food vendors, and artisans (8), farmers market (3), Café seating (3), outdoor movie (2), infrastructure for events (2), wayfinding area (2)The following activities each had one (1) comment: ticket kiosk, lighting treatment, skate park, graffiti wall, transit focussed, busking, flash	yes(12)	General "yes's (16)	See comments in column immediately to left	General approval of design and transparent elements (20); general "no's" (1)	General "yes's - café (3), visitor center (4), other/no mention of use (24)	General "yes's (11); limit to minimal intrusion (2)	General "yes's (25)	General "yes's (16)	Many comments received and span many topics. A few issues received two or more comments: improved transit signage (schedules, real time, differentiation) (3), move plaza to east (2), create landmark structures (2), improve bike circulation (2), increase bike parking (2), provide more permanent seating (2), no food trucks (2)	
	concern about art wall design with respect to transparency goal, vent structure and kiosk/pavilion (9)	Like plaza activities and events identified but maintain plaza's function as transit station	Permanent seating/non-commercial related seating (2)	more landscaping (13) - around edges (2)	Issues regarding art wall's size, placement and transparency (15)	Comments are varied; a few received 2 comments: no art wall, consider interactive light/sound/video displays (12)	concern regarding loss of historic character of plaza, lack of transformative design and placemaking quality (12)	General "no's (14)	General "no's (9)	General "no's (7)	General "no's (6)		
	other comments: more distinctive headhouse (4), design lacks identity (3), more use of brick (3), reflect more of Berkeley's history (3)			concerns about pedestrian flow (5)	general "no's (10)		retrofit existing Rotunda (5)	issues regarding location and orientation of element (7)	coordinate with plaza open space and art wall (4)	support for Café only (9)	Stated specifically no opinion/either (3)		
	Agree with café seating and removal of existing benches but concern over "privatization of public space" (4)			enhanced paving design (3)	opportunities for light and sound as art features on plaza (7)		East Side Entrance (3)	issues related to size, orientation, location, and type of structure (5)		support for visitor center only (4)	concerns regarding materials and shape - opportunity to use existing brick or wood. Suggested shapes include encouraging rectilinear forms (1), encouraging more arches instead of rectangles (1),		
	More landscaping (3); less landscaping (2)			remove from bus stop area (2)	remove tuning fork (4)		Concerns regarding safety, cleanliness, particularly glass floor (4)	issues regarding transparency (4)		All of the following received one (1) comment: BART ticket kiosk, university visitor center, public announcements, bike station, book store, downtown ambassador space, vendor space, performance space, wayfinding/tourism	Suggested styles are all over the spectrum, if mentioned, including: Arts and Craft (1), reflect Berkeley's historic character(1), modern wood & stone (1)		
	bus shelters larger, coordinate design with other elements (2)			potential for water features (1)	art wall as afterthought, prominence, and/or lack of site integration (4)		opportunities for light-based art (3)						
	coordination of headhouse placement and plaza design with Shattuck reconfiguration project (1); move main entrance to east side of Shattuck Ave (1).			the following each received one comment: paving materials too light, want less landscaping, would like to see more verticle application of landscaping	opportunities for low sculptures (3)								
					potential for overall design of plaza as "art" (2)								

Downtown Berkeley BART Plaza and Transit Area Improvement project

By May 28th, the design team has participated in over twenty (20) public and/or stakeholder meetings. The list provided below indicates input received from the public and/or stakeholder meetings, listed below.

- Initial Kick off Meeting- BART, City of Berkeley, DBA, Property Owners (1)**
- Project Design Process Planning Meeting (1)**
- Individual Meetings with Plaza Property owners (4)**
- Open House Public Meeting #1- Concept (1)**
- Meeting with Downtown Business Association (5)**
- Meeting with Berkeley Arts Commission (3)**
- Open House Public Meeting #2- Preliminary 35% design (1)**
- Meetings with UC Berkeley staff and Design Review Committee (2)**
- Meeting with Berkeley Design Advocates (2)**

Project Design Process Planning Meeting

December 16, 2013

Berkeley Public Library

- **Overwhelming majority of stakeholders recognized a desire to create visual transparency in the structures and an open and modern plaza, including the main entry.**
- **DBA expressed a desire to have flexible, programmable space & to explore opportunities for a plaza café kiosk.**
- **Improve the visibility between Shattuck and the plaza retail.**
- **All parties desired to see something transformative.**

Open House Public Meeting #1- Concept

February 3, 2014

Berkeley Public Library

- **63 comment cards were received from the public**
- **Desire for the plaza to be flexible, open and programmable was overwhelmingly positive.**
- **Property owners expressed desire to remove the colonnade structure in front of the Chase building**
- **A majority of responses supported the idea of transparency for the new main entrance and for the bus shelters**
- **Overwhelming response to provide better wayfinding in the BART station and at the plaza level, for transit connections and local destinations**
- **The main entrance was a key topic of discussion. About half of the comments favored the smaller transparent design, and the other half wanted something more iconic that distinguished “Berkeley”.**

Meetings with Downtown Business Association

February 11, 2014

February 19, 2014

March 20, 2014

April 16, 2014

April 23, 2014

- Explore potential for a plaza café/kiosk
- Integrate wayfinding elements that help guide people to local destinations
- Expressed a desire to create visual transparency throughout the plaza.
- Expressed a desire to have flexible, programmable space
- Improve the visibility between Shattuck and the plaza retail
- Expressed a desire to see something transformative

Meeting with Plaza Property Owner- Chase Building (Scott Newman)

**February 11, 2014
April 23, 2014**

- Remove the existing Rotunda and create more transparency throughout the plaza**
- Remove the proposed colonnade in front of the chase building**
- Concerned about the circulation around landscaping/bio retention areas**
- Improve the visibility between Shattuck and the plaza retail**
- Supportive of a retail structure on the plaza, north of the existing vent**
- Would like to see wayfinding and signage more coordinated and consistent in the plaza**
- Enhance the plaza paving and incorporate some quality materials (granite)**
- Would like to see all of the brick removed, on the secondary entrance as well**

Meeting with Plaza Property Owner- Walgreens (Chip Erickson)

**April 10, 2014
April 28, 2014**

- Maintain the visibility of the Walgreens entrance at the corner of Shattuck and Allston.**
- Improve the visibility between Shattuck and the plaza retail**
- Enhance the plaza paving and incorporate some quality materials (granite)**
- Increase transparency throughout the plaza**

Meeting with Plaza Property Owner- Constitution Plaza (Bill Hammonds)

April 16, 2014

- **Do not introduce competing retail (café kiosks).**
- **Improve the visibility between Shattuck and the plaza retail**
- **Increase transparency throughout the plaza**

Meetings with Arts Commission

March 10, 2014

March 24, 2014

April 14, 2014

- Identify 3 areas for public art opportunities
- Identify one location for Art wall
- Incorporate Art into design of the plaza- (lighting, paving, provide electrical pull boxes at various locations)

Artistic Enhancement-Three Defined Opportunities

- 1) Signature Art Performance/Exhibition Space- a defined area
Public Art Opportunity: Iconic Frame Artwork
- 2) Plaza Light Art Fixtures- The plaza light columns sited along the perimeter
Public Art Opportunity: Public art utilizing the media features of the light columns and/or to enhance the light columns themselves.
- 3) Temporary Public Art- our primary design objective is to open up the plaza.
Public Art Opportunity: Temporary Public art installations with RFQ organized through Berkeley arts agencies, to solicit proposals for plaza installations/performance

Meeting with Berkeley Design Advocates

April 29, 2014
May 19, 2014

- Paving pattern is too complicated
- Use higher quality paving materials (granite pavers)
- Possible retail/café kiosk is desired north of the vent structure
- Do not see effectiveness of the Art Wall
- Integrate wayfinding elements within the structures- no freestanding units
- All architecture should read as single design- main entry, secondary entry, bus shelters, & possible café kiosk
- The main entrance should not have glass paving due to maintenance. The transparency is good, but shape is not grand enough. Raise the roof above sightlines. Reduce the structural frame at eye level to increase visibility.

Meetings with UC Berkeley staff & Design Review Committee

May 2, 2014
May 13, 2014

- Larger bus shelters
- Better quality paving; recognition that granite may not be feasible
- Simplify the paving patterns
- Concerned with landscaping around the bus shelters
- Moveable tables and chairs need a maintenance plan (ownership)
- Maintain the existing entrance “Circle”, but scale it back
- Circulation should be the number 1 priority- rain garden/green infrastructure are secondary
- Secondary entrance should be transparent at the entry corners- try to remove the brick material and increase transparency
- Remove any landscape around the Shattuck and Center St corner
- Smaller Main Entrance- Maintain shape of existing Rotunda